

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TEL AV 06620 061331Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 SIL-01 SS-15 INR-07 IO-13
SP-02 PM-05 L-03 H-01 PRS-01 /069 W
-----113527 061340Z /40
R 060657Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8113

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 6620

STADIS////////////////////////////////

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ELAB, PINT, IS
SUBJECT: ADVERSE REACTION TO MESHEL'S TRIP TO U.S.

REF: (A) TEL AVIV 5891, (B) TEL AVIV 5979

1. ISRAELI PRESS HAS REPORTED HISTADRUT SECRETARY GENERAL YERUHAM MESHEL'S APPEAL TO AFL-CIO PRESIDENT GEORGE MEANY FOR AMERICAN LABOR SUPPORT IN WHAT HE ANTICIPATES MAY BE A CONFRONTATION BETWEEN HISTADRUT AND THE GOVERNMENT. IT HAS ALSO NOTED HIS CRITICISM OF THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT'S INTRANSIGENCE ON TERRITORIAL QUESTIONS AND OF ITS SETTLEMENT POLICIES IN THE OCCUPIED AREAS, AS WELL AS HIS OPINION THAT IN RETURN FOR REAL PEACE ISRAEL SHOULD MAKE TERRITORIAL CONCESSIONS TO SYRIA, EGYPT AND JORDAN. HISTADRUT SOURCES HAVE DENIED THAT MESHEL PUBLICLY APPEALED TO MEANY FOR SPECIAL HELP, SAYING THAT HIS EXPLANATIONS OF THE GROWING DIFFICULTIES OF HISTADRUT-GOVERNMENT RELATIONS MAY HAVE BEEN MISINTERPRETED BY THE ISRAELI PRESS. PRIVATELY, HOWEVER, HISTADRUT SPOKESMEN HAVE EXPRESSED THEIR CONCERN OVER THE SHARP AND CRITICAL REACTION OF THE PRESS AND ADMIT THAT MESHEL MAY HAVE MADE A SERIOUS PUBLIC RELATIONS BLUNDER.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TEL AV 06620 061331Z

2. THE GENERAL FEELING, EVEN IN LABOR PARTY CIRCLES, IS THAT SUCH AN APPEAL TO A FRATERNAL MOVEMENT WAS UNPRECEDENTED AT A TIME WHEN THE HISTADRUT IS NOT ENGAGED IN AN OPEN CONFRONTATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT AND WHEN THE RECENT TREND, IN FACT, HAS BEEN TO AVOID PUBLIC CONFRONTATIONS. MESHEL'S CRITICS ALSO FEEL

THAT HE SHOULD HAVE SPOKEN OUT IN ISRAEL AND NOT IN THE U.S. THE LIKED FACTION WITHIN THE HISTADRUT HAS DEMANDED A SPECIAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING TO DISCUSS MESHEL'S STATEMENTS. JUDGING FROM LOCAL REACTIONS, THESE STATEMENTS ARE NOT LIKELY TO HELP HIM IN DEALING WITH THE GOVERNMENT ON CRUCIAL PRICE-WAGE AND LABOR LEGISLATION ISSUES UPON HIS RETURN.

3. COMMENT: PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE MESHEL HAD INDICATED TO THE AMBASSADOR HIS CONCERN OVER WHAT HE CONSIDERED THE PROVOCATIVE AND HARD-LINE ATTITUDE WHICH THE GOVERNMENT WAS TAKING ON THE STATUS OF THE WEST BANK. MOREOVER, HE HAD BEEN ACCUSED BY VARIOUS FACTIONS WITHIN THE LABOR PARTY AND THE HISTADRUT OF BEING EXCESSIVELY COOPERATIVE TOWARD THE GOVERNMENT AND HAD BEEN CHALLENGED TO PLAY A MORE OUTSPOKEN OPPOSITION ROLE. THESE FACTORS, PLUS HIS FEELING HE IS THE ONLY LABOR LEADER WHO COULD CLAIM TO HAVE WON A SUBSTANTIAL ELECTORAL ENDORSEMENT AND A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF PERSONAL VANITY AND AMBITION, MAY HAVE LED HIM TO SAY MORE THAN HE SHOULD HAVE. HE MAY ALSO HAVE WANTED TO SHOW THAT BOTH AS LABOR PARTY AND TRADE UNION LEADER HE COULD MOBILIZE PERSONAL AS WELL AS IDEOLOGICAL SUPPORT.

4. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD BY HISTADRUT SOURCES THAT
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TEL AV 06620 061331Z

THEY WARNED MESHEL THAT U.S. PUBLIC INTEREST WOULD CONCENTRATE PRINCIPALLY ON THE EXTENT TO WHICH HE WOULD CRITICIZE THE BEGIN GOVERNMENT AND THAT HIS RESPONSIVENESS WOULD PROVOKE A NEGATIVE REACTION IN ISRAEL WHERE BEGIN CONTINUES TO ENJOY AN UNPRECEDENTED PERSONAL POPULARITY. REPORTEDLY MESHEL IGNORED THESE WARNINGS AND WAS SOMEWHAT TAKEN ABACK WHEN TOLD OF THE HOSTILE ISRAELI REACTION TO HIS STATEMENTS. HE THEN TRIED TO CORRECT SOME OF THE NEGATIVE IMPRESSION AFTER HIS MEETING WITH VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE ON AUGUST 30 WHEN HE STRESSED ISRAELI UNANIMITY IN OPPOSING NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE PLO AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE ON THE WEST BANK.
LEWIS

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, SECRETARY GENERAL, VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 06-Sep-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977TELAV06620
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770321-1275
Format: TEL
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770993/aaaadavc.tel
Line Count: 109
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 8b50034d-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Reference: 77 TEL AVIV 5891, 77 TEL AVIV 5979
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1373219
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ADVERSE REACTION TO MESHEL'S TRIP TO U.S.
TAGS: ELAB, PINT, SOPN, IS, HISTRADUT, (MESHEL, YERUHAM)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/8b50034d-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009